

CH-768
Murdock Property
Marbury
Private

1916

Erected in the second decade of the 20th century, the Murdock Property is a 2 story, side gable frame dwelling standing in the village of Marbury. Like other examples, the house is characterized by the locally prevalent broken eave center gable and a hipped roof front porch. The site also includes several accessory structures dating from the first half of the 20th century including a frame garage, chicken house, shed and a ruinous privy.

Although the dwelling has been significantly altered, the Murdock Property is an example of a little understood regionally distinctive Victorian treatment in Charles County. Furthermore, it is one of a number of historic resources in the Victorian village of Marbury which grew as a result of the establishment of the Naval Proving Ground in Indian Head. In 1916, Thomas Wright of the nearby Wright House (CH-763), sold 1 ½ acres to James Albert Murdock. As a sheet metal worker, Murdock was like his neighbors who depended on the Naval Proving Ground for employment in some capacity.

Inventory No. CH-768

1. Name of Property (indicate preferred name)

historic	Murdock Property
other	

2. Location

street and number	4615 Bicknell Road	not for publication
city, town	Marbury	vicinity
county	Charles	

3. Owner of Property (give names and mailing addresses of all owners)

name	Steven and Judith McGraw		
street and number	4615 Bicknell Road	telephone	301-753-5553
city, town	Marbury	state	MD
		zip code	2064620658

4. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc.	Charles County Courthouse	tax map and parcel:	20 p.47
city, town	La Plata	liber	2456 folio 280

5. Primary Location of Additional Data

- ☐ Contributing Resource in National Register District
☐ Contributing Resource in Local Historic District
☐ Determined Eligible for the National Register/Maryland Register
☐ Determined Ineligible for the National Register/Maryland Register
☐ Recorded by HABS/HAER
☐ Historic Structure Report or Research Report
☐ Other

6. Classification

Category		Ownership		Current Function		Resource Count	
						Contributing	Noncontributing
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	district	<input type="checkbox"/>	public	<input type="checkbox"/>	agriculture		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	private	<input type="checkbox"/>	commerce/trade	<u>1</u>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	structure	<input type="checkbox"/>	both	<input type="checkbox"/>	defense		<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	site			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	domestic	<u>4</u>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	object			<input type="checkbox"/>	education	<u>5</u>	<input type="checkbox"/>
				<input type="checkbox"/>	funerary		<input type="checkbox"/>
				<input type="checkbox"/>	government		<input type="checkbox"/>
				<input type="checkbox"/>	health care		<input type="checkbox"/>
				<input type="checkbox"/>	industry		<input type="checkbox"/>
				<input type="checkbox"/>	landscape		<input type="checkbox"/>
				<input type="checkbox"/>	recreation/culture		<input type="checkbox"/>
				<input type="checkbox"/>	religion		<input type="checkbox"/>
				<input type="checkbox"/>	social		<input type="checkbox"/>
				<input type="checkbox"/>	transportation		<input type="checkbox"/>
				<input type="checkbox"/>	work in progress		<input type="checkbox"/>
				<input type="checkbox"/>	unknown		<input type="checkbox"/>
				<input type="checkbox"/>	vacant/not in use		<input type="checkbox"/>
				<input type="checkbox"/>	other:		<input type="checkbox"/>
						Number of Contributing Resources previously listed in the Inventory	
						0	

7. Description

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Condition

<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> altered

Prepare both a one paragraph summary and a comprehensive description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

Erected in the second decade of the 20th century, the Murdock Property is a 2-story, side-gable frame dwelling standing in the village of Marbury. Like other examples, the house is characterized by the locally prevalent broken eave center-gable and a hipped-roof front porch. A rear 1 1/2-story service wing extends to form an ell. It stands facing east on a rise approximately one hundred yards from Bicknell Road. The site also includes several accessory structures dating from the first half of the 20th century including a frame garage, chicken house, shed and a ruinous privy.

The east or front elevation includes two bays on the second story and three on the first floor. The south eave elevation includes two symmetrical first and second story bays on the main block. A 1 1/2 -story ell addition is found on the west rear elevation. An enclosed hipped-roof porch shelters access into the kitchen on the south elevation of the ell.

The dwelling includes three interior-end chimney flues with corbelled caps piercing the composition shingle roof. The original wood siding is concealed by aluminum siding. The interior includes original doors and hardware as well as an original floorplan. The floorplan is identical to the Southerland House which features a narrow center passage with angled doors leading into the parlor and dining room.

To the rear of the dwelling stand several early 20th century accessory buildings including a shed with vertical board siding, a metal shed roof and a poured concrete foundation. The privy stands near the shed and includes a shed roof and whitewashed vertical board siding. The chicken house stands on concrete block piers. The brick-lined well casing near the house is inscribed "Thomas Taylor, 1911". However, no connection to the Taylor family has yet been established with land records research.

8. Significance

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Period	Areas of Significance	Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> health/medicine	<input type="checkbox"/> performing arts	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> invention	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-1999	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment/ recreation	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion	
<input type="checkbox"/> 2000-	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> ethnic heritage	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science	
	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/ settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> social history	
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> community planning		<input type="checkbox"/> maritime industry	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation	
	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation		<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:	

Specific dates	1919	Architect/Builder	unknown
Construction dates	1919		

Evaluation for:

☐ National Register ☐ Maryland Register ☒ not evaluated

Prepare a one-paragraph summary statement of significance addressing applicable criteria, followed by a narrative discussion of the history of the resource and its context. (For compliance reports, complete evaluation on a DOE Form - see manual.)

Although the dwelling has been significantly altered, the Murdock Property is an example of a little understood regionally-distinctive Victorian treatment in Charles County. Furthermore, it is one of a number of historic resources in the Victorian village of Marbury which grew as a result of the establishment of the Naval Proving Ground in Indian Head.

The single most important and long-lasting industry established in Charles County during this period was the naval ordnance manufacturing plant built at Matt woman Neck in 1890. The Naval Proving Ground was moved to Matt woman Neck when transportation from the former Proving Ground at Annapolis to the Naval Gun Factory in Washington, DC became too dangerous. Nearly nine hundred acres of land was purchased for the proving ground, and later supplemented by an additional ten thousand acres on Stump Neck. In 1898, the Naval Powder Factory was constructed, and the first powder was manufactured in 1900. During World War I, transportation to and from the factory was improved by the construction of a railroad spur from White Plains in 1917.

Although the Proving Ground was moved to Dahlgren, Virginia in 1921, the plant continued to operate and began tests that would lead to the development of jet propulsion and rocket testing at the naval station. From the beginning, the plant and proving ground provided an important and stable center of employment for the county. During the war years, the plant expanded, requiring more laborers. The town of Indian Head grew up just opposite the gates of the installation. The Navy contributed to the housing and education of its employees and their children by building housing and a school at Indian Head.

Marbury was connected to the proving ground at first by a locally built narrow footbridge and after 1917 by a unique hand drawn footbridge that allowed coal barges to proceed upstream in Mattawoman Creek. Congressman Sydney Mudd was the driving force behind the federally funded footbridge construction stating that, "The purposes of this bridge is to afford direct and convenient communication to the government employees, for nearly 50% of them have homes on the Marbury side of the Creek. Further evidence of the impact on the proving ground to the adjoining region can be found in census records from 1890-1920. Not only was the election district of Pomander, including Indian Head and Mar bury, the only area of growth. Between 1910 and 1920 the population nearly doubled from 1589 to 3,124. In 1920, a new census district was established in Mar bury having a population of 1,392.

The village of Marbury is situated on high ground on the former plantation of the Marbury family. During the early 20th century, Mar bury included a post office and barber shop as well as Twiford's Store and Lumber Yard. Most of the town residents were in some way dependent on Indian Head for their livelihood. In 1916, Thomas Wright of the nearby Wright House (CH-763), sold to James Albert Murdock 1 3/8 acres, which was part of a larger tract Wright had recently mortgaged from the Indian Head Mutual Building and Loan Association. The Murdock's retained the property until 1970 although it is unclear whether or not the Murdock's occupied the house. (1) According to 1920 census records J. Albert Murdock was the 29 years of age and employed as

Maryland Historical Trust

Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No CH-768

Name Murdock Property

Continuation Sheet

Number 8 Page 1

a sheet metal worker at the nearby powder factory. His wife Ruth, age 23 and two sons under the age of three.

Endnotes

(1) Charles County Land Records, Liber 30, Folio 8.

9. Major Bibliographical References

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10. Geographical Data

Acreage of surveyed property 1.86

Acreage of historical setting 1.86

Quadrangle name Indian Head

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

Verbal boundary description and justification

The Murdock Property is associated with Charles County Property Tax Map 20, Parcel 47.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Cathy Hardy/Historic Preservation Planner

organization Charles County Planning

date 3/3/2003

street and number 200 Baltimore Street

telephone 301-396-5815

city or town La Plata

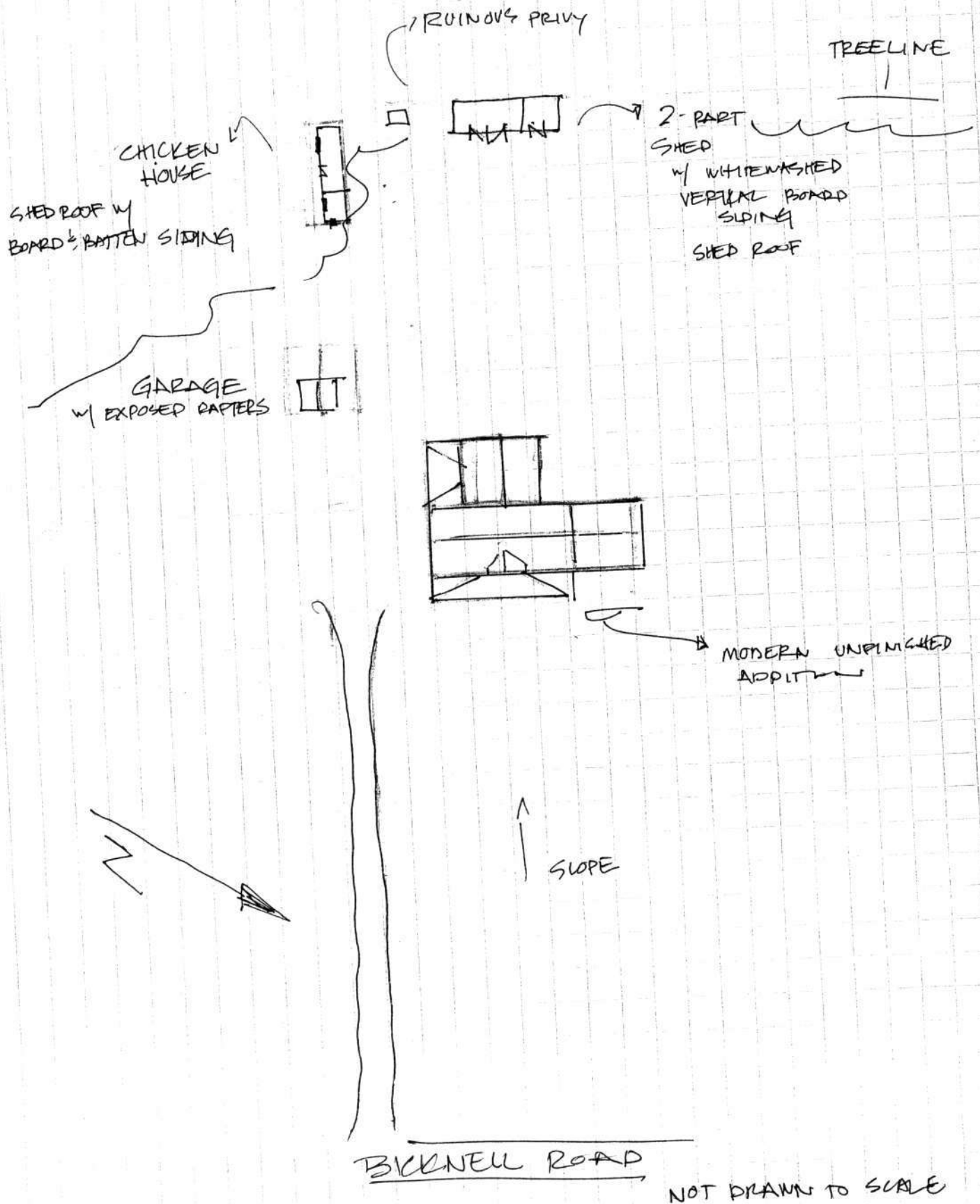
state MD zip code 20646

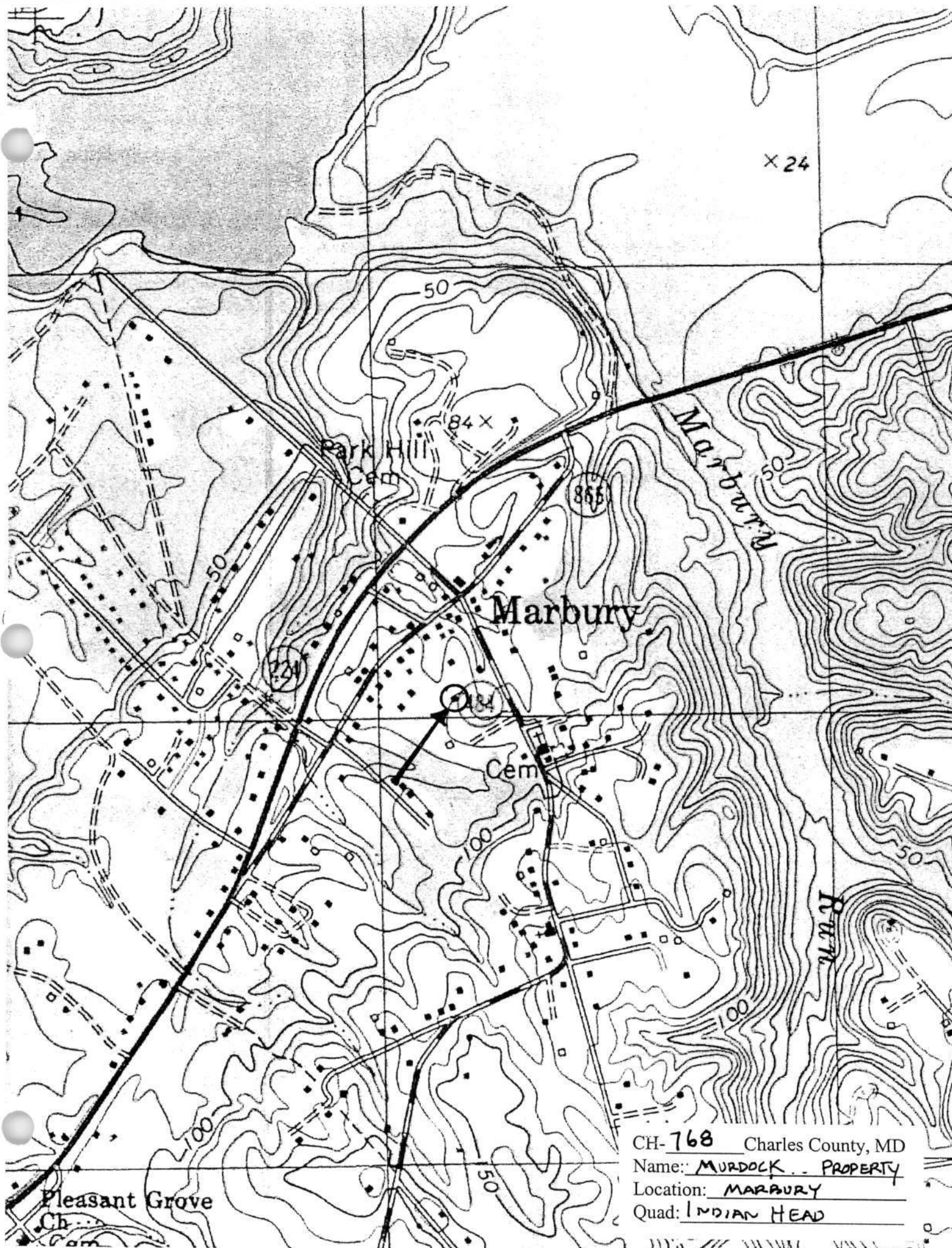
The Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 supplement.

The survey and inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

return to: Maryland Historical Trust
DHCD/DHCP
100 Community Place
Crownsville MD 21032
410-514-7600

CH- 768 Charles County, MD
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Location: MARBURY
Quad: INDIAN HEAD





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CH 768

MURDOCK PROPERTY

CHARLES CO, MD

9/2002

C. HARDY

MD SHPO

EAST ELEVATION 1 OF 2



CH 768

MURDOCK PROPERTY
CHARLES CO, MD

9/2002

C. HARRY
MD SHPO

LOOKING NW 20F2